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ABSTRACT

In March 1987, a telephone survey was conducted of a cross-section of 800 adult citizens in Michigan to determine their opinions about Michigan's public community colleges. The survey gathered information on the importance of a college education, reasons for attending college, schools best suited for a particular type of training or education, primary functions of the community college, quality of the education and community services provided by community colleges, interest in college instruction on television, and opinions about the costs of a community college education. Summary data were broken down by sex, race, income, age, and residence. Study findings included the following: (1) 81% of the respondents considered a college education to be "very important"; (2) respondents who expressed an interest in attending a community college gave as their primary reason its close proximity to home; (3) 39% of the respondents considered the opportunity to provide "cultural enrichment" as a very important function of a community college education; (4) 28% of the respondents rated local community colleges as "excellent" in meeting citizens' educational needs; (5) 84% favored having community colleges provide career counseling services to non-students; (6) 86% agreed that community colleges should require incoming students to take basic skills placement tests; (7) 13% disagreed that community college course credits should transfer to a four-year college; and (8) 44% of the respondents felt that community college costs were unreasonable. Data tables and the survey instrument are appended. (JMC)

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ED327234

OPINIONS OF MICHIGAN CITIZENS ABOUT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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A Public Opinion Survey

of a

Cross-section of 800 Adults;

Interviewed by Telephone, March 16-23, 1987

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Project Outreach is a project of the Michigan State Board of Education and is funded by the Michigan Legislature. Ned S. Hubbell, APR, is Director of Project Outreach and served as the director of this opinion research study.

For additional information about this survey and other Project Outreach activities, write Project Outreach, Michigan Department of Education, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909 or call 517/373-4631.

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All figures shown in this report are in percentages, rounded to the nearest percentage. When columns do not total 100%, it is due to rounding. When responses greatly exceed 100% it is due to multiple responses.

METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

A public opinion survey of adult citizens in Michigan was conducted from March 16-23, 1987. The poll was conducted in telephone households of the state. This survey, which sought public opinion toward Michigan's public junior/community colleges, was the second of its kind as was conducted by the Michigan State Board of Education's "Project Outreach".

Telephone numbers included in the sample were randomly generated by a computer in a sampling process known as random digit dialing (RDD). Thus, both listed and unlisted telephone households had an equal chance of being randomly selected. The sample was drawn on a proportionate basis by density of telephone households in the state.

Only one adult (18 years of age or older) was randomly selected. Respondents were selected based upon a random Respondent Selection Table developed by Kish and Carter. Average length of the interviews was 15 minutes.

A total of 44 experienced adults was utilized as interviewers in the survey. Each interviewer was trained in the use of the questionnaire by Ned S. Hubbell, Project Outreach Director. All interviewing was conducted from 5:00 to 9:30 p.m., with supervisors present during each of the four nights of polling.

A total of 800 interviews was completed. This sample size is based on a 95% confidence that sample error is no larger than 3.5%.

All survey data was tabulated through computer facilities at the Department of Education. This report was written by Ned S. Hubbell.

Survey results are reported here for both men and women and by citizens of various age groups and/or types of community residence.

Other subgroup demographic information is shown in the composition of the sample, at the end of this report. Reports of the opinions of other survey subgroups may be obtained from Project Outreach.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION

Michigan citizens continue to place a great deal of importance on college. Eight out of every ten persons polled (81%) said they feel a college education is very important today.

That high level of importance is up significantly from three years ago (1984) when 74% said a college education was very important.

And this year's response in Michigan is significantly far greater than the 58% of "very important" responses from a 1983 national Gallup poll.

Interestingly, the older the survey respondent, the greater the importance placed on a college education. Ninety-four percent (94%) of adults who are 65 years of age or older said a college education is very important today, in contrast with the 79% "very important" responses of young adults, age 18 to 24. Responses by age groups can be noted in the second Table.

"In your opinion, how important is a college education today -- very important, fairly important, or not too important?"

	('83 Gallup)	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Very important	(58%)	(74%)	81%	85%	76%
Fairly important	(31)	(21)	16	12	20
Not too important	(8)	(4)	2	1	2
Don't know	(3)	(1)	1	-	2

	18 to 24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-45 yrs.	45-55 yrs.	55-65 yrs.	65 and older
Very important	79%	72%	83%	80%	82%	94%
Somewhat important	20	23	15	15	16	5
Not too important	1	2	1	5	1	1
Don't know	-	2	2	-	1	1

Black and other minority respondents also attached a great deal more importance to a college education than did white respondents. Women placed a greater importance on a college education than did men. And respondents who are college graduates (14% of the sample) placed a greater importance on a college education than did those who were high school graduates (32% of the sample).

CITIZENS' REASONS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

In 1984, according to the first Outreach statewide poll of citizens' opinions about higher education, it was evident that the main reasons adults would go back to school were for personal improvement or enrichment, or to advance in their present job.

That interest is still present, according to this 1987 opinion study. About one-half (49%) of those polled this year said personal improvement or enrichment would be the primary reasons for their returning to school. Women were slightly more interested in that goal than were men. And women were also more interested in obtaining a degree -- eigher an Associate, bachelor's or graduate degree, than were their male counterparts.

Young adults, 18 to 24, would go back to school for two major reasons -- both related to employment: either to advance in their present job (64%) or to get a different job (57%).

> "As you know, people often go back to school for various reasons. Let me name some of these reasons. If you, yourself, were to go back to school, would you definitely go back to school, possibly do so, or not go back to school for any of these reasons:"

(All Respondents)

	Yes Definitely	Yes Possibly	No Would Not	Don't Know	Other Resp.
For personal improvement or enrichment	49%	32%	16%	2%	-%
To take classes to help move up in present job/company	42	18	33	1	4
To take classes to help get a different job	35	22	38	1	4
To take classes leading to a bachelor's degree	22	19	44	3	11
To complete requirements for a graduate degree	22	19	49	3	6
To take classes to earn Associate degree	22	21	44	3	10
To get high school diploma	19	7	22	1	51
Already in college	11	-	-	-	88
Other reason	27	8	62	4	-

WHY ADULTS WOULD DEFINITELY RETURN TO SCHOOL

	18-24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-54 yrs.	55-64 yrs.	Over 65
Personal improvement or enrichment	62%	47%	58%	45%	42%	41%
To advance in present job	64	57	51	40	24	17
To get a different job	57	42	46	36	18	15
To get an Associate degree	34	23	25	18	22	15
To get a bachelor's degree	45	25	24	18	14	15
To get a graduate degree	40	24	29	18	12	15
To get a high school diploma	38	20	12	21	14	19
Already in college	36	14	11	7	2	-
Other reason	-	20	25	60	-	-

TYPE OF SCHOOL MOST LIKELY TO ATTEND

The typical Michigan adult, if he or she went back to school, would most likely head for the nearest community college. This was the preference of both men and women and 41% of all respondents who are not presently enrolled in a school.

Preference for the community college is up slightly from that expressed in the 1984 statewide poll on higher education, when 37% expressed a preference for the community college.

And the chief reason respondents would select a community college is its proximity -- nearby location.

Nearly three out of every ten respondents (27%) preferred a 4-year public college or university. Yet the vast majority of these adults (68%) said they would be willing to consider attending a community college for one or two years before transferring to a four-year college.

> (ALL RESPONDENTS, EXCEPT THOSE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN SCHOOL OR THOSE NOT CERTAIN WHY THEY MIGHT RETURN TO SCHOOL:) "If you went, what kind of school would you most likely attend: a 4-year college, a community college, an area vocational school, a local high school, or a private trade school?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Junior/community college	(37%)	41%	41%	42%
4-year public college/university	(31)	27	29	24
Area vocational school	(6)	7	7	7
Local high school	(3)	7	6	7
Private trade school	(10)	7	6	9
4-year private college/university	(5)	3	2	3
Other	(2)	1	1	1
None of these	(1)	1	1	1
Don't know	(5)	6	6	5

Interest in the community college is shown in the next table by citizens of various age groups.

	18-24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-54 yrs.	55-64 yrs.	Over 65
Prefer community college	50%	40%	48%	44%	32%	29%

(IF COMMUNITY COLLEGE) "May I ask why?"

	41% of All Resp.*	41% of Women*	42% of Men*
Location/close to home	25%	27%	24%
For general instruction	15	13	15
To upgrade job skills	12	12	11
Cost of tuition is reasonable	11	11	11
Offers wide variety/good courses	11	9	13
To brush up on basic skills	10	10	11
Personal growth and pleasure	10	7	14
Trade, industrial or technical instruction	7	5	10
Business/office training	7	9	5
Health occupations	3	4	1
Public service occupations	2	2	1
Miscellaneous reasons	14	14	13
Can't say	3	2	4

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

(IF FOUR YEAR COLLEGE) "Would you consider attending a Community College for one or two years before transferring to a four-year college?"

	30% of All Resp.	31% of Women	27% of Men
Yes	68%	63%	74%
No	26	31	20
Can't say/not sure	5	4	6

SCHOOL BEST SUITED FOR JOB TRAINING/RETRAINING OF ADULTS

The community college is seen by the plurality of adults (32%) as the school best suited for job training or retraining of adults. That perception is voiced more frequently than in 1984 when 27% named the community college as the best place for adult job training.

There has also been a marked shift of perception about the role of the private trade school in this regard. In 1984, 30% of those polled expressed the opinion that a private trade school is the best place to provide adults with job training or retraining. That opinion is now shared by only 11% of the respondents. The second most-frequently mentioned school for job training this year is the area vocational school, with 18% of the mentions.

> "Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with job training or retraining skills for adults -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, area vocational school, private trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Community college	(27%)	32%	32%	33%
Area vocational school	(-)	18	19	16
4-year public college	(14)	17	18	15
Private trade school	(30)	11	7	15
Adult education program	(10)	10	11	9
Local high school	(2)	3	3	3
4-year private college	(3)	2	2	2
Don't know	(7)	7	9	6

SCHOOL BEST SUITED FOR ADULT CAREER PLANNING/GUIDANCE

The community college is also seen as being best suited to provide adults with career planning and guidance services. Nearly three out of every four respondents (39%) selected the community college from a listing of six educational institutions, plus private industry.

The four-year public college was identified by 20% of the survey respondents as the best place to receive this service. Further, one out of every ten respondents (10%) preferred a local adult education program for this purpose.

Strongest preference for the community college in this role was expressed by respondents between the ages of 35 and 55.

"Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with career planning and guidance services -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, private trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Community college	(30%)	39%	39%	38%
4-year public college	(21)	20	19	22
Adult education program	(13)	10	13	8
Private trade school	(8)	8	7	9
Local high school	(8)	6	5	8
4-year private college	(5)	4	4	3
Private industry	(5)	3	2	5
Other	(1)	1	-	1
Don't know	(9)	9	11	8

SCHOOL BEST SUITED FOR TRAINING IN MODERN TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

The community college had to take a back seat as respondents selected the four-year public college as the institution best suited to train adults in the skills required for modern technology. The plurality of those polled (27%) favored the four-year public college, another 22% preferred the community college, 14% selected a trade school and 13% preferred an area vocational school.

It should be pointed out that preference for trade schools for this type of training was also markedly less than when the same question was asked three years ago. In 1984, 28% of those polled said trade schools were best suited for this type of training. That high percentage was cut in half this year when only 14% preferred a trade school for this type of training.

"Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with training in the skills required for modern technology -- the local high school, adult education programs, community college, area vocational school, private trade school, private industry or a 4-year college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
4-year public college	(30%)	27%	29%	25%
Community colleges	(14)	22	22	21
Trade school	(28)	14	15	13
Area vocational school	(-)	13	11	14
Private industry	(10)	8	6	9
4-year private college	(5)	4	3	4
Adult education programs	(3)	3	3	3
Local high school	(1)	1	-	2
Other	(2)	-	-	-
Don't know	(7)	9	10	8

SCHOOL BEST SUITED FOR ADULTS' REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION

Local adult education programs and community colleges shared the preference of respondents as best places for adults who need remedial instruction in some basic skills. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of those polled preferred adult education for this purpose while 36% favored this as a role of the community college. Adult education mentions are down somewhat from three years ago while community college preference is higher now than in 1984.

> "Some adults find that they need some remedial (make-up) instruction in order to learn certain skills. That might include "catch-up" education in some basic skills -- like reading, math or science. If you required that, where would you prefer to go for it -- a local high school, adult education program, a community college or a 4-year college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Adult education program	(43%)	37%	41%	31%
Community college	(31)	36	35	38
Local high school	(15)	15	13	17
4-year public college	(6)	8	7	9
4-year private college	(2)	2	1	2
Other	(1)	-	-	-
Don't know	(2)	3	3	3

ENROLLMENT OF RESPONDENTS IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

According to survey results, residents of slightly more than one-half (54%) of Michigan's households have enrolled at one time in a junior or community college. That market penetration is significantly higher than reported in 1984, wnen 46% of the state's households reported having a person from the home enrolled at one time in a community college.

The vast majority of respondents (86%) who were enrolled in a community college, or someone from their household had been enrolled, felt that they or these persons were fairly well prepared to do college work. Only about one out of every ten of these respondents (11%) said they were not very well prepared.

But only one-third (36%) of those who said they were not prepared for college work had to take remedial classes once entering college. They represent only 2% of all persons polled in the survey.

"Have you, or anyone in your household, ever attended a Michigan junior or community college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	(46%)	54%	53%	56%
No	(54)	45	46	44

(IF "YES") "Did you/they feel that you were fairly well-prepared to do college work?"

	54% of All Resp.	53% of Women	56% of Men
Yes	86%	86%	87%
No	11	10	11
Can't recall	3	4	1

HOW ADULTS WOULD FEEL ENROLLING IN A COLLEGE CLASS

Those adults who have not been in a college classroom feel they would be fairly comfortable in a community college class. The exception to this opinion was reflected by those respondents age 65 or older. One-fifth of them (22%) said they would be very uncomfortable doing so, another 15% felt they would be somewhat uncomfortable in a college class.

Overall, nearly one-third (31%) of those polled said they would be very comfortable in a community college class while another one-third (35%) said they would be somewhat comfortable.

Differences of opinion by age can be noted in the second Table shown below:

(IF "NO") "If you have not enrolled in a college class in several years, how comfortable would you feel enrolling in one offered by the community college in your area?"

	45% of All Resp.	46% of Women	44% of Men
Very comfortable	31%	32%	30%
Somewhat comfortable	35	36	35
Not too comfortable	14	14	15
Not comfortable at all	8	8	7
Doesn't apply -- have been in class recently	3	3	3
Can't say/not sure	8	6	10

	18-24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-54 yrs.	55-64 yrs.	Over 65
Very comfortable	31%	38%	37%	30%	24%	24%
Somewhat comfortable	52	43	37	30	31	17
Not too comfortable	2	9	20	19	22	15
Not comfortable at all	2	1	3	6	14	22
Doesn't apply	2	4	4	4	-	3
Can't say	10	5	-	11	10	19

Respondents who said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable now enrolling in a community college class gave these reasons: "I'm too old for that" (50%), or "It's been too long since high school" (26%) or other personal reasons (15%).

If adults were to take a class offered by a community college, they prefer an evening class rather than one during the daytime. The majority of respondents (56%) prefer a night class, although women show considerable interest in either morning or early afternoon classes.

"If you were to take a class offered by the community college, what time of day would be the best for you to do that?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
After supper	56%	49%	64%
Morning	19	22	15
Early afternoon	11	15	7
Late afternoon	9	11	7
On the weekend	2	2	1
Anytime at all	2	1	3
Not interested/no time	6	6	5
Can't say	1	1	1

Adults also show a great deal of interest in taking a college class if that could be offered in their community, rather than go to the college campus for that class. Better than three-fourths (77%) of those polled stated that preference, as can be noted in the next Table.

"If you were interested in taking a course offered by a community college, would you prefer to go to that college for that instruction or would you be willing to take a college class if it could be offered by the college in your community?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Prefer to go to the college	12%	9%	15%
Prefer taking class in local community	77	81	71
Doesn't matter	6	5	7
Not interested	2	2	2
Don't know	4	3	6

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In 1977 when The Gallup Organization first conducted a nationwide survey of public attitudes toward community colleges, the number #1 function of such a school, respondents said, was to provide academic training leading to a bachelor's degree. That same function was again seen as the paramount mission of the community college in a 1981 follow-up national poll by Gallup. In both studies, providing vocational/technical training was seen as a distant secondary function of the community college.

Michigan citizens do not agree. In the 1984 Outreach statewide poll of opinions about postsecondary education, respondents said the two functions were of equal importance (see Table below). That same opinion is reflected again in this year's survey. And the third, most important function of the community college, respondents said again, is to provide adults with make-up instruction in the basic skills.

> "Community colleges have a number of functions. As I read each of these, tell me if you think that is a very important function of a community college, somewhat important function, or not too important a function?"

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Don't Know
Provide academic training so that students can go on to a 4-year college or university and earn a bachelor's degree, if they want to.	87% (88%)	10% (10%)	2% (1%)	1% (1%)
Provide vocational or technical training, like data processing, nursing, electronics, etc.	83 (86)	14 (11)	2 (1)	1 (2)
Provide adults with make-up instruction in basic skill areas, like reading, math and science.	73 (75)	19 (17)	6 (6)	1 (2)
Provide community services, like job change counseling, drug abuse advice, short noncredit courses, etc.	60 (54)	28 (34)	9 (9)	2 (4)
Personal growth and pleasure, just for the opportunity to learn.	47 (-)	41 (-)	11 (-)	1 (-)
Provide opportunities for cultural enrichment, such as music literature, and art appreciation or instruction.	39 (39)	46 (43)	13 (15)	1 (2)

*(Percentages in parentheses are from 1984 Statewide Higher Ed. Poll.)

In response to a related question, the vast majority of respondents (74%) said high school students should be allowed or encouraged to take college classes and receive college credit while they are still in high school. Only one out of every five respondents (20%) was opposed to that.

"Should high school students be allowed or encouraged to take community college classes and receive college credit while they are still in high school?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	74%	77%	70%
No	20	18	22
Don't know	6	4	8

CITIZENS' RATINGS OF THE EDUCATION/TRAINING PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Citizens' ratings on the way community colleges meet the needs of citizens again were extremely high. In the 1984 Outreach statewide poll on opinions about higher education, 68% of those polled rated community colleges as "excellent" or "good" in this regard. This year, 71% of those interviewed rated the community colleges just as highly.

Twenty-eight percent (28%) rated the colleges as "excellent" for the way citizen educational needs are met, 43% rated the community colleges as "good" in this regard, 10% as "fair" and only 3% as "poor". Another 16% had no opinion on the matter.

Reasons for the high ratings were many, chiefly because -- respondents said: good curriculum, wide variety of programs offered (38%), "the college has a good reputation" (25%), students are well prepared (15%), the college shows a concern for students (11%) and convenient location, close to home (11%).

"How would you rate the way in which the nearest junior/community college meets the educational needs of citizens in your area -- excellent, good, fair or poor?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Excellent	(22%)	28%	28%	29%
Good	(46)	43	42	43
Fair	(14)	10	9	11
Poor	(3)	3	3	2
Don't know	(15)	16	18	14

(IF "EXCELLENT" OR "GOOD") "In what way?

	(68% of '84 State)*	71% of All Resp.*	70% of Women*	72% of Men*
Good curriculum/wide variety of programs	(46%)	38%	39%	36%
Good reputation/own observation	(21)	25	26	23
Quality of education, students well-prepared	(20)	15	14	15
Concern for students/good counseling	(-)	11	12	9
Location -- close to home	(9)	11	9	12
Quality instructors, staff	(8)	9	8	10
Everyone can attend/open days and evenings	(-)	8	7	9
Tuition, cost reasonable	(4)	5	5	5
Community involved/good PR and communication	(-)	2	2	3
Miscellaneous	(2)	4	4	4
Can't say	(10)	10	9	11

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

(IF "FAIR OR POOR") "Would you mind telling me why you feel that way?"

	13% of All Resp.*	12% of Women*	13% of Men*
Poor quality of education/little course variety	27%	30%	24%
Personal experience/hearsay	14	8	19
Poor instructors, staff	13	13	13
Location too far/no transportation	9	13	6
Tuition/costs too high	6	8	4
Miscellaneous	18	13	22
Can't say	24	26	22

*(Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.)

Those high ratings, almost identical in nature, were reflected in responses to a follow-up question, when 70% of those polled rated the education/training provided by the nearest community college as excellent or good.

And in a related question, the majority of respondents (56%) said they feel the quality of education provided by a community college is about the same as that provided by a four-year college or university. About one-fourth of those polled (24%) said the quality of education provided by a community college is not as good as that offered by a four-year college or university.

"How good is the education/training provided by the nearest junior/community college -- excellent, good, fair, or poor?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Excellent	(19%)	27%	28%	25%
Good	(48)	43	40	46
Fair	(11)	7	8	6
Poor	(2)	2	1	2
Can't say	(20)	22	22	22

"Do you think the quality of education provided by a community college is better than, poorer than or about the same as that provided by a four-year college or university?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Better	8%	8%	7%
Poorer	24	23	26
About the same	56	56	56
Don't know	12	13	11

Respondents who have had personal experience with a community college -- either as a former student or with a family member enrolled at one time in a community college, gave the highest ratings of any respondent to the community college.

"How would you rate the way in which the nearest junior/community college meets the educational needs of citizens in your area -- excellent, good, fair, or poor?"

	All Resp.	Former Students	Non-Students
Excellent	28%	33%	22%
Good	43	44	42
Fair	10	9	11
Poor	3	3	2
Can't say	16	10	22

"How good is the education/training provided by the nearest junior/community college -- excellent, good, fair or poor?"

	All Resp.	Former Students	Non-Students
Excellent	27%	33%	20%
Good	43	43	43
Fair	7	7	7
Poor	2	2	1
Can't say	22	15	29

OPINIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Survey respondents overwhelmingly favor the community college providing certain services for community members who are not enrolled as a student.

Better than eight out of every ten respondents (84%) favors the junior/community college providing career planning services to non-students who want it. Further, 79% favor the community colleges offering library services to the community, over three-fourths (77%) favor the college providing tutoring services and 72% favor non-students receiving personal counseling services of the community college.

In addition, two-thirds of the survey respondents (66%) favor community colleges offering citizens the use of its athletic facilities and 64% support the college offering its theater/fine arts facilities to community use.

"Tell me if you favor or oppose the junior/community college providing these kinds of services for non-students?"

	Favor	Oppose	Don't Know
CAREER PLANNING	84% (-%)	12% (-%)	4% (-%)
LIBRARY SERVICES	79 (80)*	18 (18)	3 (2)
TUTORING SERVICES	77 (59)	19 (36)	4 (6)
PERSONAL COUNSELING SERVICES	72 (60)	22 (35)	6 (5)
USE OF ATHLETIC FACILITIES	66 (60)	27 (35)	6 (5)
THEATER/FINE ARTS	64 (53)	30 (41)	6 (6)

*(Percentages in parentheses are from 1984 Statewide Higher Ed. Poll.)

OTHER OPINIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICES

Placement Tests for Incoming Students

Nearly all respondents (86%) agree that community colleges should require all incoming students to take placement tests in basic skills to determine a student's placement in any reading, writing or math courses.

> "Do you think that community colleges should require all incoming students to take a test in basic skills (reading, writing and math) to determine a student's placement in a particular basic skills college course?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	86%	86%	85%
No	12	11	12
Don't know	3	2	3

Transferability of Community College Courses

Two-thirds of those interviewed (66%), and 70% of former community college students, believe that course credit for work done at a community college is worth the same credit as that granted by a four-year college. In short, the majority believe that community college credits are transferable to a four-year college.

> "If a community college student transfers to a 4-year college or university, are community college courses worth the same credit as those of the 4-year college? In short, do the courses transfer?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men	Former Students	Non-Students
Yes	66%	61%	72%	70%	61%
No	13	16	10	12	15
Don't know	21	23	18	18	24

Who Should Pay for Local Employee Re-Training?

Nearly three-fourths of those polled (70%) feel that local employers in business or industry should pay the costs involved in a community college if asked to provide re-training in certain skills for employees. Another 9% feel the individual employee who receives the training should pay the costs involved while 6% think those costs should be shared by the employee and employer. Only 4% feel the community college should absorb the costs while another 8% think costs should be shared by the employee, employer and the community college.

"In many communities, community colleges are asked to provide re-training in certain skills for employees of local business or industry. Who should pay for that re-training -- the employee, the local employer, or the community college?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Employee	9%	10%	8%
Local employer	70	71	69
Community college	4	4	4
All three	8	9	8
Employee and employer equally	6	4	9
Can't say	3	3	3

CITIZEN INTEREST IN COLLEGE INSTRUCTION ON TV

In 1984, in the first Outreach statewide opinion poll of citizens' opinions about higher education, high interest was expressed for four-year and community colleges offering instruction on public TV or cable television.

That same high interest -- (68% of those polled) was voiced again in this year's study. And 70% of those who favored TV instruction in college courses, said they would be interested in taking such a course.

"Do you favor or oppose 4-year colleges or universities or community colleges offering instruction in college courses on public TV or cable television?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Favor	(64%)	68%	69%	68%
Oppose	(29)	25	25	24
Don't know	(7)	7	6	8

(IF "FAVOR") "If college courses were offered on public TV in your area, would you be interested in taking such a course?"

	(64% of '84 State)	68% of All Resp.	69% of Women	68% of Men
Yes	(73%)	70%	74%	65%
No	(23)	24	21	28
Don't know	(3)	6	5	6

PLANNING/COORDINATING HIGHER EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

A slim majority of respondents (51%) believe that the planning and coordination between and among the state's community colleges and the four-year colleges and universities should be done by the State Board of Education. Another one-third (32%) of those polled feel that is the responsibility of each individual institution.

Opinions on this question almost directly parallel those expressed in the 1984 statewide survey on higher education, as can be noted in the Table below.

"At the State level, who should do the planning and coordinating of programs between and among the state's community colleges and the 4 year colleges and universities?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
State Board of Education	(55%)	51%	51%	51%
Each individual institution	(31)	32	33	32
Legislature	(4)	3	2	4
The Governor	(1)	2	2	1
Combination of all 4	(-)	2	2	3
Miscellaneous combinations	(1)	2	2	2
Don't know	(8)	7	7	7

OPINIONS ABOUT THE COSTS OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

The typical Michigan adult believes the cost of tuition at a community college is less than that of a four-year state college or university, the majority feels such tuition and fees are about right, but the typical citizen is actually unaware of the approximate cost of attending a community college.

But citizens are almost evenly divided on whether college cost increases in recent years are reasonable or unreasonable. About one-half of those polled (45%) feel such increases are reasonable but another 44% disagree.

"College costs, like everything else in recent years, have increased. Do you think those increases are reasonable or unreasonable?

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Reasonable	45%	43%	48%
Unreasonable	44	46	41
Don't know	11	11	11

"As you understand it, is the cost of tuition at a community college more, less or about the same as that of a four-year state college or university?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
More	3%	3%	2%
Less	74	73	76
About the same	9	8	10
Don't know	14	16	12

"Based on what you know, do you think the tuition and fees at your nearby community college are too high, about right, or too low, when compared to other schools?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Too high	14%	14%	13%
About right	58	55	61
Too low	2	1	2
Don't know	27	29	23

It is estimated that it costs a student between $1,000 and $1,500 for tuition, fees and books to attend a community college in the state, for one full year. Yet only 17% of those polled in the survey estimated that correctly.

Two thirds of those interviewed (63%) estimated community college costs as much higher than the $1,000-$1,500 range.

"What do you think it costs now to attend a community college in Michigan for a full year? For tuition, fees and books, do you think it costs under $1,000; $1,000 to $1,499; $1,500 to $2,000; over $2,000 to $2,999, or over $3,000?

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Under $1,000	6%	4%	7%
$1,000 to $1,499	17	16	17
$1,500 to $2,000	31	30	32
$2,000 to $2,999	20	20	19
Over $3,000	12	12	11
Don't know	15	17	13

A slim majority of respondents (53%) favor the policy of most community college districts that requires out-of-district students to pay a higher tuition than that charged local college district residents. Such a policy is supported by a fairly narrow 53%-to-43% margin, with another 4% having no opinion.

"In most of the state's community colleges, students who live outside of the college district are required to pay higher tuition than are those who live in the district. Do you agree with this, or disagree?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Agree	53%	50%	56%
Disagree	43	46	40
Don't know	4	4	4

In the opinion of the plurality of survey respondents (43%), state aid should contribute most of the income to operate a community college. Respondents' opinions on this matter are almost identical to those responses to the same question in the 1984 Outreach statewide poll on attitudes toward higher education.

Another one-fourth (24%) of those polled favored tuition as the primary source of income to a community college. Least -- by only 13%, was local taxes. Another 13% of respondents felt a combination of all three -- state aid, tuition, and local taxes, was the key to financing the community colleges.

"Presently, junior/community colleges receive their income mostly from three sources -- tuition, state aid, and local taxes. In your opinion, which one should contribute most of the income to operate the community college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
State aid	(40%)	43%	45%	42%
Tuition	(25)	24	22	25
Local taxes	(14)	13	12	15
Combination of all three	(14)	13	14	11
Others	(2)	2	2	2
Don't know	(5)	5	6	5

According to a statewide survey of college-bound Michigan high school students last fall, nearly four out of every ten (38%) planning to go to college say they and their family will not be able to afford it without financial aid.

In this poll of adults' opinions about community colleges, 42% of the respondents indicated the same need exists. While the majority (55%) said they or their family would be able to afford an education at a community college, 42% would not -- including a slim majority of men interviewed (51%) who would require financial aid.

"If you or someone in your household wanted to attend a community college, would you or your family be able to pay for it without financial aid?"

	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	55%	64%	47%
No	42	33	51
Can't say	3	3	2

Michigan adult citizens are evenly divided in opinions on whether the State should provide student financial aid for students going to either a private, independent college or to a privately-run or industry-operated trade school.

While 45% favor state financial aid for students planning to attend a private college, 49% are opposed. Resistance to that, however, has dropped significantly from 1984 when 62% of those polled were opposed to that practice.

The even division of opinion on the practice of the state providing financial aid for students in trade schools is unchanged from 1984. Then, 47% favored such aid while 49% were opposed. Now, in 1987, 46% favor it and 47% are opposed.

"Do you think the State should provide any form of student financial aid for students going to a private college?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	(32%)	45%	48%	42%
No	(62)	49	47	52
Don't know	(6)	6	5	6

"Should the State provide student financial aid for these students who wish to attend a privately-run or industry-operated trade school?"

	('84 State)	All Resp.	Women	Men
Yes	(47%)	46%	49%	42%
No	(49)	47	43	51
Don't know	(4)	7	8	7

COMPOSITION OF THE SURVEY SAMPLE
(95% Confidence; ± 3.5% Error)

s = 800

SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Female	54%
Male	46

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

Grade school or less (grades 1-8)	3%
Some high school (grades 9-11)	10
High school graduate	32
Vocational-technical school	3
Some college	28
College graduate	14
Post-graduate study	10

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

18-19 years old	3%
20-24 years old	8
25-29 years old	11
30-34 years old	12
35-39 years old	13
40-44 years old	10
45-49 years old	7
50-54 years old	6
55-59 years old	7
60-64 years old	8
65 and over	14
Declined to answer	1

COMPOSITION OF THE SURVEY SAMPLE
(Continued)

TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

Less than $10,000	12%
More than $10,000; less than $15,000	10
More than $15,000; less than $25,000	17
More than $25,000; less than $35,000	20
More than $35,000	30
Don't know	4
Declined to answer	7

RACE/ETHNIC STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Black	11%
Hispanic	1
Native American	1
White	86
Other	1
Declined to answer	1

TYPE OF COMMUNITY OF RESPONDENTS

Detroit	10%
Other large city	24
Suburban area	18
Small city/town	28
Village/rural area	18
Can't say	2

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROPERTY TAX PAYER

Yes	62%
No	32
Don't know	6

Project Outreach
of the Michigan State Board of Education
Michigan Department of Education
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-4631

VERSION **3** (1

DISPOSITION LOG

(2-5

INTER-VIEW #	PHONE #	----Continue on number---- BUSY	NO ANSWER	CALL BACK DAY	CALL BACK TIME	------ Bump ------ BUS. INEL.	UL/OS/ DISC.	REF'D/ TERM'D	COM-PLETE
					AM PM				
					AM PM				
					AM PM				
					AM PM				
					AM PM				
					AM PM				

INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE OF INTERVIEW: _____

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: _____ MIN. (6-7)

OPENING BY INTERVIEWER:

Hello, this is _____, I'm calling you from Lansing for the Michigan Department of Education. We're doing a study of public opinion about the state's system of community colleges.

This telephone number (REPEAT NUMBER) was randomly selected by computer. We don't know the name it is listed under. Is this a residence or a business? (IF A BUSINESS, THANKS AND TERMINATE.) (IF A RESIDENCE, CONTINUE).

To get a random sample, I need to ask two questions about the people living in your household.

How many adults 18 years of age or older live in this household? CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER →

How many of those 18 and over are men? → CIRCLE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

In your household, I should talk to the... (CIRCLE APPROPRIATE BOX.) Is he/she there?

	1 ADULT	2 ADULTS	3 ADULTS	4 OR MORE
0 MEN	ADULT	YOUNGEST WOMAN	YOUNGEST WOMAN	OLDEST WOMAN
1 MAN	ADULT	MAN	OLDEST WOMAN	MAN
2 MEN		OLDEST MAN	WOMAN	OLDEST WOMAN
3 MEN			YOUNGEST MAN	WOMAN OR OLDEST WOMAN
4 OR MORE				OLDEST MAN

(8)

(9)

WHEN SELECTED PERSON IS OTHER THAN YOUR INITIAL CONTACT SAY:

Hello, this is _____. I'm a volunteer calling for the Michigan Department of Education.

We're doing a statewide public opinion survey to find out what Michigan residents think about education after high school.

All opinions you give us will remain completely confidential. They will be summarized to give state officials a general picture of public opinion.

My questions will take about 15 minutes or so, depending on you. Is this a convenient time for you? (IF NOT, MAKE A CALL-BACK APPOINTMENT.)

(IF PROPER RESPONDENT IS READY, START WITH #1. IF NOT, MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR A CALL-BACK.)

1. First of all, in what type of community do you live -- large city, suburban area, small city or town, a village, or rural area? (GET NAME OF COMMUNITY.)

Detroit: _____	01
Other city (SPECIFY:) _____	02
Suburban area (SPECIFY:) _____	03
Small city/town (SPECIFY:) _____	04
Village-Rural area (SPECIFY:) _____	05
Can't say	06

2. In your opinion, how important is a college education today -- very important, fairly important, or not too important?

Very important.	01
Fairly important.	02
Not too important	03
Don't know.	04

3. Are you currently enrolled in college?

Yes (SKIP TO #12 on page 4)	01
No (GO TO #4 on page 3).	02

Adults go back to school for different reasons. Let me name some of those reasons. If you, personally, were to go back to school, would you definitely go back to school, possibly do so, or not go back to school for any of these reasons?

READ ONLY THESE

	(01) Yes Definitely	(02) Yes Possibly	(03) No Would Not	(04) Don't Know
4. To get a high school diploma				
5. For personal improvement or enrichment				
6. To take classes to help you move up in your present job or company				
7. To take classes to help you get a different job				
8. To take classes to earn a 2-year Associate Degree				
9. To take classes leading to a bachelor's degree				
10. To complete requirements for a graduate degree				
11. Other reason (SPECIFY:)				

12. Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with job training or retraining skills for adults -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, area vocational school, private trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college? (ONE ANSWER ONLY) IF 4-YR. COLLEGE, AS "PUBLIC OR PRIVATE")

Local high school 01
Adult education program 02
Community college 03
Area vocational school. 04
Private trade school. 05
4-year college (public) 06
4-year college (private). 07
Don't know. 08

13. Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with career planning and guidance services -- the local high school, adult education program, community college, private trade school, private industry, or a 4-year college? (ONE ANSWER ONLY) (IF 4-YR. COLLEGE, ASK "PUBLIC OR PRIVATE")

Local high school 01
Adult education program 02
Community college 03
Private trade school. 04
Private industry. 05
4-year college (public) 06
4-year college (private). 07
Other 08
Don't know. 09

14. Which of these schools is best suited to provide adults with training in the skills required for modern technology -- the local high school, adult education programs, community college, area vocational school, private trade school, private industry or a 4-year college? (ONE ANSWER ONLY) (IF 4-YR. COLLEGE, ASK "PUBLIC OR PRIVATE")

Local high school 01
Adult education programs. 02
Community colleges. 03
Area vocational school. 04
Trade school. 05
Private industry. 06
4-year college (public) 07
4-year college (private). 08
Other 09
Don't know. 10

15. Some adults find that they need some remedial (make-up) instruction in order to learn certain skills. That might include "catch-up" education in some basic skills -- like reading, math or science. If you required that, where would you prefer to go for it -- a local high school, adult education program, a community college or a 4-year college? (IF 4-YR. COLLEGE, ASK "PUBLIC OR PRIVATE") (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Local high school 01
Adult education program 02
Community college 03
4-year college (public) 04
4-year college (private). 05
Other 06
Don't know. 07

16. (ALL RESPONDENTS, EXCEPT THOSE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN SCHOOL OR THOSE NOT CERTAIN WHY THEY MIGHT RETURN TO SCHOOL:) If you went, what kind of school would you most likely attend: a 4-year college, a community college, an area vocational school, a local high school, or a private trade school? (ONE ANSWER ONLY) (IF 4-YR. COLLEGE, ASK "PUBLIC OR PRIVATE")

4-year college/university (public) (GO TO #17) 01
4-year college/university (private) (GO TO #17) 02
Community/junior college (GO TO #18). . . 03
Area vocational school (SKIP TO #19). . . 04
Local high school (SKIP TO #19) 05
Private trade school (SKIP TO #19). . . . 06
Other (SKIP TO #19) 07
None. 08
Don't know. 09

17. (IF FOUR YEAR COLLEGE) Would you consider attending a Community College for one or two years before transferring to a four-year college?

Yes 01
No. 02
Can't say/not sure. 03

18. (IF COMMUNITY COLLEGE) May I ask why?

For general instruction 01
Business/office training. 02
Public service occupation 03
Trade, industrial or technical instruction 04
Health occupations. 05
To brush up on (basic) skills 06
To upgrade my job skills. 07
Personal growth and pleasure (adult ed.). 08
Other (SPECIFY:)

_____ 09
Can't say 10

19. Have you, or anyone in your household, ever attended a Michigan junior or community college?

Yes (GO TO #20) 01
No (GO TO #22). 02
Don't know. 03

20. (IF "YES" ON #19) Did you/they feel that you were fairly well-prepared to do college work?

Yes 01
No. 02
Can't recall. 03

21. (IF "NO" ON #20) Did you/they have to take any remedial classes in college in order to get caught up?

Yes 01
No. 02
Can't recall. 03

22. (IF "NO" ON #19) If you have not enrolled in a college class in several years, how comfortable would you feel enrolling in one offered by the community college in your area?

Very comfortable. 01
Somewhat comfortable. 02
Not too comfortable 03
Not comfortable at all. 04
Does not apply -- have been in class recently. 05
Can't say -- not sure 06

23. May I ask why? _____

_____

_____

24. If you were to take a class offered by the community college, what time of day would be the best for you to do that? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS BUT MARK ANY THAT RESPONDENT GIVES.)

Morning 01
Early afternoon 02
Late afternoon. 03
After supper. 04
On the weekend. 05
Not interested/no time. 06
Other (SPECIFY:)

_____ 07

Community colleges have a number of functions. As I read each of these, tell me if you think that is a very important function of a community college, somewhat important function, or not too important a function.

START WITH X'D ITEM ↓		(01) Very Important Function	(02) Somewhat Important Function	(03) Not Too Important Function	(04) Don't Know
( )	25. Provide academic training so that students can go on to a 4-year college or university and earn a bachelor's degree, if they want to.				
( )	26. Provide vocational or technical training, like data processing, nursing, electronics, etc.				
( )	27. Provide community services, like job change counseling, drug abuse advice, short noncredit courses, etc.				
( )	28. Personal growth and pleasure, just for the opportunity to learn.				
( )	29. Provide opportunities for cultural enrichment, such as music, literature, and art appreciation or instruction.				
( )	30. Provide adults with make-up instruction in basic skill areas, like reading, math and science.				

Tell me if you favor or oppose the junior/community college providing these kinds of services for non-students?

	(01) Favor	(02) Oppose	(03) Don't Know
31. Personal counseling services			
32. Tutoring services			
33. Career planning services			
34. Theatre/fine arts opportunities			
35. Library services for the public			
36. Citizen use of athletic facilities			

37. How would you rate the way in which the nearest junior/community college meets the educational needs of citizens in your area -- excellent, good, fair or poor?

Excellent 01
Good. 02
Fair. 03
Poor. 04
Don't know. 05

38. (IF "EXCELLENT" OR "GOOD") In what way?

_____

_____

_____

39. (IF "FAIR OR POOR") Would you mind telling me why you feel that way?

_____

_____

_____

40. How good is the education/training provided by the nearest junior/community college -- excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Excellent 01
Good. 02
Fair. 03
Poor. 04
Don't know. 05

41. Do you think that community colleges should require all incoming students to take a test in basic skills (reading, writing and math) to determine a student's placement in a particular basic skills college course?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

42. If a community college student transfers to a 4-year college or university, are community college courses worth the same credit as those of the 4-year college? In short, do the courses transfer?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

43. If you were interested in taking a course offered by a community college, would you prefer to go to that college for that instruction or would you be willing to take a college class if it could be offered by the college in your community?

Prefer to go to the college 01
Prefer taking class in local community. . 02
Doesn't matter. 03
Not interested. 04
Don't know. 05

44. Should high school students be allowed or encouraged to take community college classes and receive college credit while they are still in high school?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

45. In many communities, community colleges are asked to provide re-training in certain skills for employees of local business or industry. Who should pay for that re-training -- the employee, the local employer, or the community college?

Employee. 01
Local employer. 02
Community college 03
All 3 04

46. Do you favor or oppose 4-year colleges or universities or community colleges offering instruction in college courses on public TV or cable television.

Favor 01
Oppose (SKIP TO #48). 02
Don't know (SKIP TO #48). 03

47. (IF "FAVOR" ON #46) If college courses were offered on public TV in your area, would you be interested in taking such a course?

Yes 01
No. 02
No public TV in my area 03
Already doing that. 04
Don't know. 05

48. At the State level, who should do the planning and coordinating of programs between and among the state's community colleges and the 4 year colleges and universities? Should that be done by (READ CHOICES). . . . (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

ROTATE THESE ANSWER CHOICES

State Board of Education. 01
The Governor. 02
Legislature 03
Each individual institution 04
Don't know. 05
Other (SPECIFY:)

_____ 06

49. Do you think the quality of education provided by a community college is better than, poorer than or about the same as that provided by a four-year college or university?

Better. 01
Poorer. 02
About the same. 03
Don't know. 04

50. As you understand it, is the cost of tuition at a community college more, less or about the same as that of a four-year state college or university?

More. 01
Less. 02
About the same. 03
Don't know. 04

51. Based on what you know, do you think the tuition and fees at your nearby community college are too high, about right, or too low, when compared to other schools?

Too high. 01
About right 02
Too low 03
Don't know. 04

52. College costs, like everything else in recent years, have increased. Do you think those increases are reasonable or unreasonable?

Reasonable. 01
Unreasonable. 02
Don't know. 03

53. In most of the state's community colleges, students who live outside of the college district are required to pay higher tuition than are those who live in the district. Do you agree with this, or disagree?

Agree 01
Disagree. 02
Don't know. 03

54. Presently, junior/community colleges receive their income mostly from three sources -- tuition, state aid, and local taxes. In your opinion, which one should contribute most of the income to operate the community college? (ROTATE 3 ANSWER CHOICES): (CIRCLE ONLY ONE)

ROTATE THESE ANSWER CHOICES

( ) Tuition 01
( ) State aid 02
( ) Local taxes 03
Combination of all three. 04
Other (SPECIFY:)

_____ 05
Don't know. 06

55. What do you think it costs now to attend a community college in Michigan for a full year? For tuition, fees and books, do you think it costs under $1,000; $1,000 to $1,499; $1,500 to $2,000; over $2,000 to $2,999, or over $3,000?

	Under $1,000	$1,000 1,499	$1,500 2,000	$2,000 2,999	Over $3,000	Don't Know
One year costs	01	02	03	04	05	06

56. If you or someone in your household wanted to attend a community college, would you or your family be able to pay for it without financial aid?

Yes 01
No. 02
Can't say 03

57. Do you think the State should provide any form of student financial aid for students going to a private college?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

58. Should the State provide student financial aid for these students who wish to attend a privately-run or industry-operated trade school?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

These last questions are just to help us classify the opinions of the people we are interviewing.

59. May I ask, do you currently pay property taxes to support a community college?

Yes 01
No. 02
Don't know. 03

60. Would you mind telling me the year in which you were born? (CIRCLE ONE)

Prior to 1922 (Over 65) 01
1923 through 1927 (60-64) 02
1928 through 1932 (55-59) 03
1933 through 1937 (50-54) 04
1938 through 1942 (45-49) 05
1943 through 1947 (40-44) 06
1948 through 1952 (35-39) 07
1953 through 1957 (30-34) 08
1958 through 1962 (25-29) 09
1963 through 1967 (20-24) 10
1968 through 1969 (18-19) 11
Declined to answer. 12

61. What is the last grade in school you had the opportunity to complete? (CIRCLE ONE)

Grade school or less (grades 1-8) 01
Some high school. 02
High school graduate (grades 9-12). . . . 03
Vocational/technical school 04
Some college. 05
College graduate. 06
Post graduate study 07
Don't know. 08
Declined to answer. 09

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